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# Grant & Loan Programs: BRIDGE

## Guidelines for All BRIDGE Applicants

1. Please follow all application instructions and fill out all forms as completely as possible. The rating and review criteria provided in this document are not to be filled out by the applicant. These criteria are provided as a guide to the kinds of projects that may be competitive under the BRIDGE Fund, and applicants should include any information that would enhance their application based on the criteria. Note that the rating and review system is used only as a guide for the OneGeorgia Authority and/or its Agent in making its funding decisions. Other factors unique to a specific application may also be considered.
2. Note that the application document includes an application checklist for needed forms and supporting documentation. This checklist will assist the applicant in preparing as complete an application as possible. For any item requested in the application, supporting documentation will strengthen the application, and, if not provided, may be requested by the reviewer if deemed necessary to arrive at a recommendation.
3. The BRIDGE Fund is designed to be a flexible community and economic development tool to assist in providing broadband services to Georgia's counties underserved or not currently covered by such service; however, resources for the program are limited. All potential applicants should seek the advice of the OneGeorgia Authority and/or the Georgia Technology Authority (GTA) prior to submitting a BRIDGE Fund application.
4. All applicants should carefully read the BRIDGE Fund Regulations and the Statement of General Conditions. In addition to the Statement of General Conditions, an award may be subject to additional special conditions at the discretion of the OneGeorgia Authority or its Agent. All award recipients are subject to audit by the Department of Audits and to monitoring by the Authority or its agent. In addition, BRIDGE Fund monies are required to be included in recipient's annual independent financial audit or report of agreed upon procedures.
5. The initiation of project activities prior to an award could endanger BRIDGE Fund funding. While the BRIDGE Fund is flexible, initiation of project activities prior to award may indicate that BRIDGE Fund monies are not needed. Please check with the OneGeorgia Authority as soon as it appears that such a situation may occur. Under certain circumstances and with the advanced written approval of the OneGeorgia Authority, other funds may be used on an interim basis to finance a project for which BRIDGE Fund monies are being sought. BRIDGE Fund monies, if approved, may then be used to fund the project on a permanent basis. Nonetheless, all BRIDGE Fund requirements must be met, and the applicant must demonstrate that BRIDGE Fund monies are necessary to the project. In addition, the recipient will be required to document the source and use of all funds used in the project, including interim funds. All BRIDGE Fund applications must include information about any interim financing to allow the OneGeorgia Authority to determine the eligibility of the proposed interim financing arrangements.

6. All attached budget forms identify source and use of funds. The specific use of BRIDGE Fund monies should be clearly identified as well as the use of all other funds. All sources of funds should be identified. Sources of funds must equal uses. Prior to drawdown of funds or upon audit or monitoring of the BRIDGE Fund project, documentation will be required showing how BRIDGE Fund and other project funds have been spent.
7. Eligible activities are listed in the BRIDGE Fund Regulations that are part of this document. Generally, activities are eligible if they are listed in the regulations and if they assist an eligible applicant in carrying out its responsibilities under state law, specifically, in the provision of broadband services to an unserved or underserved area of rural Georgia. Please contact the OneGeorgia Authority to verify that proposed activities are eligible. Note that direct grants for private ownership of project assets are not eligible for a grant under the BRIDGE Fund.
8. (A) Conflicts of Interest - In general, no person who is an elected or appointed official, employee, agent, consultant, officer or any person serving in a similar capacity with any participating public agency that exercise or have exercised any functions or responsibilities with respect to any BRIDGE Fund activities can benefit from a BRIDGE Fund project. Those persons who are in a position to participate in a decision-making process or gain inside information regarding BRIDGE Fund proposed or related activities, who may obtain a personal financial interest, or benefit from the project, or have any interest in any contract, subcontract or agreement with respect to any BRIDGE Fund project are also prohibited from benefiting from the project. The prohibitions against benefiting from a BRIDGE Fund project would apply to the covered individuals or those with whom they have family or business ties, for one (1) year following their tenure in the covered position.  
(B) Exceptions - Upon written request, the OneGeorgia Authority may grant an exception to the provisions of paragraph A above, on a case-by-case basis, before funds are expended. Exceptions can only be granted when the OneGeorgia Authority determines that the exception will serve to further the purposes of the BRIDGE Fund Program. To seek an exception, a written request for an exception must be submitted by the applicant to the OneGeorgia Authority which: 1) fully discloses the conflict or potential conflict of interest, prior to the applicant undertaking any action which results or may result in a conflict of interest, real or apparent; 2) describes how the conflict of interest was publicly disclosed; and 3) includes a written opinion of the applicant's attorney that the interest for which the exception is sought would not violate state or local law
9. Other guidelines or requirements may be established by the OneGeorgia Authority in order to further the purposes of the BRIDGE Fund.

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